

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 0313

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CSCE, FI, UR, ME, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KEKKONEN'S VIEWS ON CSCE, MIDDLE
EAST AND ENERGY CRISIS.

REFERENCES: HELSINKI 0241, STATE 025365, 026197, 027048.

1. DURING FORTY-MINUTE VISIT WITH PRESIDENT KEKKONEN
TODAY, HE GAVE ME FOLLOWING VIEWS ON SUBJECTS I RAISED
IN ACCORDANCE INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED FROM DEPARTMENT
IN REFTELS.

2. US-FINNISH RELATIONS: KEKKONEN SAID HE APPRECIATED
VERY MUCH MY REFERENCE TO THE USC'S CONTINUED UNDERSTAN-
DING OF FINNISH NEUTRALITY. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS
UNDERSTANDING WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM.

3. CSCE: KEKKONEN SAID IT WAS USEFUL TO RECEIVE THE
US POSITION ON CSCE AT THIS TIME. AS HOST FOR PHASE
III HE WAS FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS IN GENEVA CLOSELY.
HE SAID FINLAND HAD ADOPTED A ROLE AS MODERATER BUT
WOULD ALSO MAKE INITIATIVES ON ITS OWN. HE HOPES
THAT BY JUNE PHASE II WILL REACH A POINT THAT
DEFINITE PLANS CAN BE MADE TO MOVE ON TO PHASE III.
HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT BASKET III WAS DIFFICULT AT THIS
TIME.

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4. MIDDLE EAST: KEKKONEN SAID HE HAD THE GREATEST
RESPECT FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER, PARTICULARLY THE
RESULTS HE HAD ACHIEVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE KNEW
FROM HIS SOVIET FRIENDS THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS

KEEPING THE SOVIETS INFORMED AND THAT THE SOVIETS ALSO WERE TAKING HELPFUL STEPS BEHIND THE SCENES, BUT NOT IN THE OPEN.

5. ENERGY: KEKKONEN SAID FINLAND WAS IN A BETTER POSITION THAN OTHER NORDIC COUNTRIES IN VIEW OF ITS BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. (FINLAND RECEIVES ROUGHLY SEVENTY PERCENT OF ITS CRUDE FROM THE SOVIET UNION PLUS NATURAL GAS.) THE CURRENT PRICE IS HIGH BUT HE THINKS IT WILL COME DOWN, ALTHOUGH IT WILL NEVER RETURN TO THE PRICE LEVEL PRIOR TO LAST FALL. THE ARAB OIL EMBARGO PROVED SUCCESSFUL AND THEREFORE THE USE OF OIL AS A POLITICAL WEAPON WILL MOST LIKELY CONTINUE.

6. COMMENT: PRESIDENT KEKKONEN AT SEVENTY-TWO APPEARED IN EXCELLENT PHYSICAL CONDITION. HE WAS FRIENDLY AND RELAXED IN EXPRESSING HIS VIEWS. ALTHOUGH THE PRESIDENT USUALLY DISCOURAGES VISITS BY LOCAL AMBASSADORS UNLESS A STATE VISIT IS IMMINENT, HIS CORDIALITY THIS AFTERNOON REFLECTS HIS APPARENT INTEREST IN KEEPING IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH US ON SUBJECTS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.
KREHBIEL

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